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# The Friday Letter

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## Give Somebody a Chance

What's the Reason for the Suggested Giving Guide?: Some complain that the CFC has no right to tell people how much to give. Unfortunately, they completely miss the point of the Suggested Giving Guide. Neither the giving guide nor any person can tell you how much to give...that's your decision alone. Everyone's personal and financial situation is different. Perhaps you can give more, perhaps less...but the message is clear. The work of the many voluntary agencies and the needs of the people they serve require substantial support. The giving guide in the pledge card shows clearly that giving a relatively small amount each payday adds up to a bigger gift and a very meaningful contribution to the agencies and people who need our help.

We hope you will consider the Suggested Giving Guide and choose to make a generous payroll pledge.



### On the Hill



A task force of the House Select Committee on Hunger held hearings October 22 on "Appalachia: Rural Women and the Economics of Hunger." FNS Administrator Robert Leard was the Department witness.

"On a national scale, the scope of FNS programs is impressive and varied in nature," he told the task force, chaired by Rep. Leon Panetta (D-California). "FNS administers 13 food assistance programs primarily for persons with low incomes. Special target groups include nutritionally-needy women, infants, children, Native Americans, the elderly, and school-age children."

He provided statistics on the food programs pinpointing participation and dollar amounts for the States of Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, and West Virginia.

He also noted that one of the first food stamp pilot projects in 1961 was in West Virginia, and that the first participant in the Women's, Infants', and Children's program lived in Kentucky.

In conclusion, he said, "There is no doubt that our public feeding programs are an essential resource to many people in what is called Appalachia as well as throughout our Nation."

-Bill Tlucek



## Bode and Leard Address National Advisory Council

Both Assistant Secretary John W. Bode and Administrator Robert E. Leard were key speakers at the annual meeting of the National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition, held in Arlington, Virginia, October 22-24, 1985.

Assistant Secretary Bode told the Council members about the Reagan Administration's unwavering commitment to continue providing quality child nutrition programs. He also pointed out that the economic problems we face in this country, due to the large Federal deficit, make it more important than ever to target these programs to those in need and to improve their administration at the Federal, State, and local levels.

He then went on to discuss the Department's 1986 budget proposals. "To do our share to reduce the Federal deficit," he said, "on July 1 of this year the Department submitted proposed child nutrition legislation to Congress, which would result in a first-year savings of \$686 million. Unfortunately, as yet, our legislation has not been introduced." He said that there are two main goals of this legislation:

- To control total Federal expenditures in the child nutrition programs while maintaining benefits for needy children; and

- To improve the administration of these programs and of WIC at the Federal, State, and local levels.

"One of the legislative proposals achieves the first goal," he said, "by eliminating cash and entitlement commodity assistance for nonneedy children in school lunch and breakfast programs and in child care centers. Bonus commodities would still be available for all meals."

He said that another of the proposals eliminates cash and commodity subsidies for meals served to children in family day care homes who are not eligible for free or reduced price meals. In addition, the first goal would be accom-

plished by eliminating the 1986 cost of living adjustment to the reimbursement rates for all child nutrition programs.

He then added that the legislative proposal would require the reinstatement of a family income test for families whose children eat meals at family day care homes and urged the Council to continue to recommend this test.

Bode concluded his remarks by stating that the Administration is opposed to H.R. 7, the child nutrition bill passed by the House in September, saying that it is far too costly. Then he briefly spoke about the evaluation of alternatives to commodity donation study and urged the Council to recommend the continuation of the commodity program.

Administrator Leard told the group that "this is an appropriate time for the National Advisory Council to meet, since last week was National School Lunch Week." He went on to describe some of the accomplishments of the school lunch program.

Leard cited targeting and verification as two major initiatives on which the Agency has focused in the child nutrition programs over the last 4-1/2 years. He said, "You can expect to see more of these types of activities in the future."

The Administrator then highlighted two major efforts on which FNS will be focusing in the future--reestablishing a on in the future--reestablishing a means test for family day care homes in the Child Care Food Program and continuing the existing commodity donation program in the child nutrition programs.

In closing, Leard asked those in the group once again for their advice on "how we can continue to improve the management of USDA's child nutrition programs." He told them that any recommendations they had would be included in next year's Advisory Council report to the President and the Congress.

-Bonnie Polk and  
Martha Newton

## Leard Addresses Military Food and Packaging Group

Speaking at the fall meeting of Research and Development Associates for Military Food and Packaging Systems (R&D Associates) in Boston on October 24, Administrator Bob Leard began by saying, "Many of the responsibilities involved in running a military feeding operation are similar to those involved in managing food assistance programs."

He pointed out to the audience--375 food industry scientists and military personnel--that the National School Lunch Program "helps children who are developing lifelong eating habits to appreciate a variety of nutritious foods. You might consider school lunch cafeterias as training grounds for military feeding facilities."

Leard explained the goals of the major FNS programs and described briefly how they operate. He went on to describe initiatives the Agency has undertaken to improve management and help participants get the most from the food programs. His examples included developing the Make Your Food Dollars Count campaign to help food stamp participants, responding to the changing food preferences of school lunch customers, providing technical assistance to the States and conducting demonstration projects like the electronic benefits transfer (EBT) system.

Before he concluded, Leard responded to the inquiry R&D Associates has made about testing products, developed for the military, for potential use in food assistance programs. While he acknowledged that "it may be possible for us to benefit from your pioneering efforts," Leard emphasized the nutrition, cost and client-appeal requirements that govern decisions about USDA's domestic food programs.

-Debbie Massey

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## Crow Speaks to Food Stamp Directors

On Monday, October 21, Associate Administrator Sonia Crow was in San Diego, California, where she addressed the 10th national conference of the American Association of Food Stamp Directors.

In her remarks, Mrs. Crow told the assembled state directors that they are continuing to improve the management of the Food Stamp Program. Preliminary information we have received indicates that food stamp overpayments have decreased in 1985 by \$41 million; issuance losses have continued to decline; and claims collected by the States have increased by \$10.5 million.

She said the projected cost avoidance in 1985 through improvements in certification, issuance, and collections is \$52.7 million.

For 1986, she said that Operation Awareness would continue, and she added that in the coming year we will undertake four major initiatives in conjunction with the States: prevention of food stamp certification errors before they're approved; targeting States' resources on error rate reduction; more automation at the State level; and increased claims collections.

Mrs. Crow brought the state directors up to date on some items that are of special interest to them: the electronic benefits transfer project in Reading, Pennsylvania; the Health and Human Services/USDA joint effort to make the Aid to Families with Dependent Children and Food Stamp Programs more compatible; and the current work registration and job search efforts.

-Michael McAteer

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## Open Season

Open Season for enrollment in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB) will be held from November 4 through December 6, 1985. It begins 1 week early this year and runs for 5 weeks. This will give employees more time to review their open season material, select a plan, and submit a registration form to Personnel Division.

During open season, employees are permitted to change plans or options or move from self-only to self and family coverage. Most employees are eligible to enroll in the Programs. However, Temporary NTE 1 year and Intermittent employees are excluded.



All employees will be provided with the 1986 FEHB Enrollment Information and Plan Comparison Chart that will give the major features of each plan and the enrollee's share of the biweekly premium rates.

Activities will be planned at headquarters to help employees make an informed choice of plans and options. Representatives of FEHB plans will be available to answer questions about their plan's benefits and procedures during FNS's Health Benefit Seminar on November 21, 1985. Flyers will be circulated to all employees at Park Center, announcing the time and location of this seminar.

## Preliminary Summary of Food Assistance Program Results

Following are preliminary estimates of participation in the Federal-State food assistance programs for the month of August with comparisons to the previous month and to the same month of last year.

	<u>August 1984</u>	<u>July 1985</u>	<u>August 1985</u> 2/
<u>Food Stamp Program: 1/</u>			
People participating (mil.) .....	20.1	19.3	19.6
Value of bonus coupons (\$ mil.) .....	846.3	867.0	868.4
Average bonus per person .....	\$ 42.20	\$ 44.91	\$ 44.40
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	921.4	949.1	950.5
<u>Child Care Food Program:</u>			
Number of meals served in centers (mil.) .....	25.5	25.9	26.0
Number of meals served in homes (mil.) .....	19.8	21.0	21.3
Percentage of all meals served free .....	76.4	76.5	76.4
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	30.9	32.6	32.8
<u>Summer Food Service Program:</u>			
Number of meals served (mil.) .....	21.5	39.3	22.1
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	30.9	57.9	32.4
<u>Special Supplemental Food Program (WIC):</u>			
People participating (mil.) .....	3.1	3.2	3.3
Food cost (\$ mil.) .....	95.2	102.8	104.9
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	118.9	127.2	130.5
<u>Commodity Supplemental Food Program:</u>			
People participating (thous.) .....	141.0	141.8	140.6
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	2.8	2.5	2.5
<u>Food Distribution to Indians and Needy Families:</u>			
Number of projects in operation .....	99	102	103
People participating (thous.) .....	131.3	145.7	144.9
Total program cost (\$ mil.) .....	4.0	4.4	4.4

1/ Puerto Rico has been excluded from all months.

2/ Data collected as of October 23, 1985.

Note: No data are provided for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs during the summer months.

Food and Nutrition Service  
Program Information Division

## Job Opportunities

FNS is seeking to fill the following vacant positions. To be considered for one of them, submit an up-to-date SF-171, Personal Qualifications Statement, and current performance appraisal to the appropriate personnel office. If you're interested in a Headquarters position, apply to the Employment Branch, Personnel Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Alexan-

dria, Virginia 22302. Apply directly to Headquarters office for all GS-14 and 15 positions. For Regional positions, apply directly to the Regional Office. For details on the requirements for any of the positions listed below, consult the official vacancy announcement. These are posted on designated bulletin boards or you can get copies from the appropriate Regional or Headquarters personnel office.

### Friday Letter Vacancy Listing by Vacancy Number

Job Title	Series	Grade	Closing Date	Vacancy Number	Organizational Unit
Clerk Typist	322	GS-2/3/4	until filled	85-69	FNS
Clerk	303	GW-1/2	until filled	85-81	FNS
Supervisory Contract Specialist	1102	GM-13	11/12/85	85-86	ASD
*Industrial Specialist (Printing & Publishing)	1150	GS-12	11/04/85	85-90	FNP
Food Program Specialist	120	GS-5/7	11/18/85	85-91	SFPD
Food Program Specialist (Schedule B-PAC Position)	120	GS-5/7	11/18/85	85-91A	SFPD
Nutritionist (Permanent-Part-time 16 to 24 hours/week)	630	GS-9/11	11/18/85	85-92	NTSD
*Secretary Typing	318	GS-5	11/12/85	85-93	FDD
Home Economist	493	GS-12	11/05/85	85-H-33	HNIS
Statistician	1530	GS-7	11/18/85	85-H-34	HNIS

\*FNS - Headquarters-wide

FNS - Food and Nutrition Service  
 ASD - Administrative Services Division  
 FNP - Family Nutrition Programs  
 SFPD - Supplemental Food Programs Division  
 NTSD - Nutrition and Technical Services Division  
 FDD - Food Distribution Division  
 HNIS - Human Nutrition Information Service



## Regional News

**Train-Shaped Cafeteria Line:** It looks like a train, but it never leaves the station. That's because it's really an elementary school self-service cafeteria line designed by FNS's John Friese with help from the staff of South Carolina's Department of Education.

"Bobbie Rudisill, a recent systems specialist with the South Carolina State Department of Education, and I developed the basic food service system design," said Friese, who works in the Southeast Regional Office as a food service systems specialist. "She came up with the idea of a serving line shaped like a train."

Friese and Ms. Rudisill developed the idea 2 years ago. They devised a serving line that had an engine and a caboose with wheels and a smokestack on the front end. Trays were stacked on the front of it to look like a cowcatcher, and they decided the food service personnel would dress up like engineers.



John Friese works at his desk.

The train-shaped serving line design and its accompanying equipment has captured the attention of people beyond its home at Andrews Primary School in Andrews, South Carolina. The train self-service concept was shown in September at the National Food Equipment Manufacturers Biennial Show in New Orleans.

Opened in August 1984, the newly designed system was placed in a new elementary school where it serves approximately 650 kids daily.

"When we were planning new schools several years ago, we called in John Friese and the South Carolina State agency consultant to plan the food operation for Andrews Primary, which serves 4-year-olds through fourth graders," said Susan Williams, Georgetown County food service director. "When we first started considering self-service, we were very skeptical. We didn't know if 4- and 5-year-olds could really serve themselves."

When Friese visited the school, he was encouraged by what he saw. "The kids love it," Friese said. "The children are eating better and are practicing the nutrition education they receive in the classroom. They find food they like within the choices they have."

Although Friese was heavily involved in the new self-serve system, the key to its success has been Federal and State cooperation. Friese's role has been to provide technical assistance to the South Carolina staff.

After the county decided on the new contemporary food service operation, the details of the program were handled by Bobbie Rudisill who worked with the architects on kitchen layout and facility details.

Friese also did the final review of all kitchen facilities and assisted the local school in the start-up of the operation by telephone contact and a visit near the beginning of their operation.

Friese has not limited work on his self-service food operations to one food service system. He has remodeled 12 other operations in South Carolina and has provided technical assistance for some 30 new or remodeled systems in Alabama and Tennessee. In Nashville, the city school system adopted the new basic design for 32 of their schools. By the end of next year, 127 Nashville schools are expected to provide self-service operations to students.

Friese plans to continue to assist States in tackling new ideas and new projects. When the serving line forms at Andrews Primary School the next time, Friese may not be near the train, but he's still the chief engineer.

Story and photo by Steve Watson

## Regional News

**Georgia WIC System Conference:** The Georgia WIC Program hosted a one-day conference on August 7 to present details on their WIC automated data processing system. Nineteen States were represented with 51 attendees. The Georgia system, designed under contract with Electronic Data Systems (EDS) Corporation, went into effect April 1, 1985. The conference included presentations on technology in the computer industry and discussions on how the WIC Program may be affected in the future.

The Georgia WIC Program serves 106,000 people a month throughout all counties in Georgia with 88 percent of the caseload coming from the high-risk category. The new EDS system will enable that percentage to go even higher by providing better measurements of the targeted population.

Among the many features of the new system, several were of special interest to the conference attendees: the system was designed to be exceedingly accurate, to correlate income and medical data, and to offer flexibility as the needs of the program and the people WIC serves change. The system will also be capable of quickly identifying voucher types and voucher numbers and displaying data in graphic format.

The Georgia WIC Program staff invited the local agencies to participate in the design of the new system by holding training

sessions...before the final product was created. This provided the contractor a valuable opportunity of having input from those who would actually implement the system before it was too late to make improvements. This ensured that the system designed on paper would work in an actual situation as well as pave the way for a smooth transition into the new computer age.



Alice Lenihan, North Carolina WIC Director, shares her thoughts with Crayton Lankford, Director of Supplemental Food Programs, at the Georgia WIC System Conference.

Story and photo by Diana Gail Swindel

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## Washington Area News

**Joyce Gillum Receives Award:** Joyce Gillum, new secretary for Analysis Support Branch, Office of Analysis and Evaluation, recently received a cash award for special service from her former employer, the Extension Service.

She was honored for her work with the Computerized Outlook Information Network (COIN), a database for the State Extension Service.

Photo by Paul Rowen





## Regional News

### Midwest Food Editors' Conference

The Food Editors' Conference held in Chicago on August 22-23 attracted 110 registered participants. A great deal of work goes into the preparation of a successful conference. The following pictures show some of the behind the scene preparation in Chicago.



The Washington participants in the conference arrived in Chicago early in the week. Jim Lafferty, Director, News Division, Office of Information, USDA, makes sure that all Midwest media have been notified.



Midwest Deputy Regional Administrator Tom Pate, and Midwest Regional Public Information Director Eunice Bowman (right) await word on arrangements for TV media coverage from Dianne Durant, News Branch Chief, Office of Public Information, Alexandria, Virginia.



Ann Chadwick, Director, Office of the Consumer Advisor, USDA, makes a last minute check on the conference center and meal arrangements.



The Food and Drug Administration worked with USDA to sponsor this conference. Gloria Logan, Consumer Affairs Representative, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, FDA, and Kathryn A. Brunner, Consumer Affairs Officer for the FDA, from Denver, Colorado, assemble registration packets.





Secretary John R. Block in his opening address speaks of his concern for the farmer and the future of farming.



Participants follow the speakers' handouts on the USDA dietary guidelines to understand the nutritional needs of healthy people.



Assistant Secretary John W. Bode was busy after his presentation with one-on-one interviews. Mr. Bode discusses consumer-farm issues with Laurant Belsie of the Christian Science Monitor.



USDA canine inspector Lady and her handler Mike Simon of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service inspect baggage for food, plants and animal products that might be brought into the U.S. from foreign countries. Mr. Simon is the National Program Coordinator for APHIS's Detector Dog Program.

## Regional News

### Creative Use of USDA Commodities

Mid-Atlantic Region's Bernard Brachfeld, Nutrition and Technical Services Director, and Nutritionist Kathleen Martin arranged for several industry organizations to provide food demonstration workshops for school food service personnel at several locations within the region. State Child Nutrition Program Directors from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia assisted MARO in planning the sessions which featured demonstrations on the use of USDA commodities in the School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Local school food service personnel attending the workshops were able to learn first-hand from experts and had an opportunity to taste test the final products.

Industry organizations involved in the demonstrations included: the Rice Council, the American Dairy Association, and the Quality Bakers of America.



American Dairy Association home economist Ann Diverio shared ideas on ways to season butter to give a special flavor to other items on the school lunch or breakfast menu. Samples included: cheese butter, raspberry butter, and taco butter.



Rae Hartfield with the Rice Council demonstrated how to make rice salad which tasted very similar to potato salad.



Grace Cleaver, a Bergen County, New Jersey, food service worker, assisted in kneading the dough for cheese rolls utilizing USDA commodity cheese, flour, and butter.

